

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUCAR 01256 250933Z
ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-05 L-03 EB-08 COME-00 FEA-01
ACDA-07 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-13 NSAE-00 NSC-05 NRC-05
DODE-00 /073 W
-----250936 040363 /10
P R 250841Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1760
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BUCHAREST 1256

OES FOR HOYLE
ERDA FOR HILL

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: TECH, BTIO, RO
SUBJ: GENERAL ATOMIC HOT CELL BID
REF: (A) BUCHAREST 1053, (B) STATE 021061

1. AMBASSADOR, E/C COUNSELOR AND SCIATT MET WITH SCNE
PRESIDENT MIHULECEA FEB 22 FOR REVIEW OF PAST TWO MONTHS'
ACTIVITIES. TO AMB'S QUESTIONS ABOUT GA HOT CELL, MIHULECEA
STUCK TO EARLIER STATEMENT THAT TRANSACTION NOW ENTIRELY
IN HANDS OF MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE. HE SUPPORTED DPM
PATAN'S PREVIOUS ASSERTION TO E/C COUNSELOR (REF A),
SAYING GA'S BID APPROXIMATELY 40 PERCENT ABOVE COMPETITION
AND SO NOT REALISTIC. THIS SURPRISED HIM BECAUSE OF GA'S
COMPETITIVENESS OF TRIGA TEST REACTOR, AND HE WONDERED
ABOUT "WHAT WAS GOING ON" AND WHETHER "SOMETHING ELSE
WAS AT STAKE?" MOREOVER, HE SAID, IN SCNE'S OPINION
THE GA HOT CELL WAS NOT ECHNICALLY SUPERIOR
IN ANY SIGNIFICANT WAY, JUST MORE COSTLY, SO FURTHER
DEBATE ON ERDA'S END-USE STATEMENT WAS PRESENTLY
IRRELEVANT. AMBASSADOR PRESSED THIS POINT AND WAS
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TOLD THE ROMANIAN POSITION REMAINED ESSENTIALLY UNCHANGED
IN GIVING "EXTRA" ASSURANCES BEYOND NPT. NONETHELESS,
MIHULECEA PERSISTED IN SUGGESTING THAT GA OUGHT TO BE IN RUNNING.

2. COMMENT. WE DOUBT CONTENTION OF 40 PERCENT UNFAVOR-
ABLE MARGIN BUT BELIEVE GA'S BID LIKELY WELL ABOVE
ALLEGED FRENCH AND BRITISH COMPETITORS. ARGUMENTS THAT

TECHNOLOGY FUNCTIONALLY THE SAME FOR NEEDED PURPOSES ALSO
BELIEVEABLE, EVEN THOUGH GA REPORTEDLY WENT FIRST CLASS
ALL THE WAY AT ROMANIANS' OWN INSISTENCE.

3. CONCERNING NUCLEAR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (REF A),
AMBASSADOR STRESSED THAT PRIVATE INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS IN
HTGR WERE NOT EXCLUDED JUST BECAUSE ERDA HAD DECLINED
TO ENTER INTO INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, AND THAT
IN ANY CASE IT WAS UNRELATED TO HOT CELL TRANSACTION.
MIHULECEA SAID HE REALIZED THIS AND THAT SCNE WOULD KEEP
THINKING ABOUT HTGR.

4. ACTION REQUESTED. PLEASE INFORM GA REP CHESSWORTH
OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS BEFORE HIS NEXT VISIT BUCHAREST
EXPECTED MARCH 1, AND LET EMBASSY KNOW OF ANY GA REACTION
AND SPECIFIC DATES OF CHESSWORTH VISIT.
BARNES

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NNN

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